

**Martin O'Malley**  
*Governor*

**Lisa H. Kornberg**  
*Executive Director*

**Anthony G. Brown**  
*Lt. Governor*

**Zainab Alkebsi**  
*Deputy Director*

## **Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing**

### **FACT SHEET**

#### **Our Mission:**

ODHH represents the Governor and his goal of promoting equal access for all Marylanders by providing expertise that enhances the general welfare of Maryland's deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind residents.

#### **Our Vision:**

All Maryland citizens who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deafblind will have equal and full access to resources, services, and opportunities for participation in all aspects of community life.

#### **Our Responsibilities:**

- Promote the general welfare of deaf, deafblind, and hard of hearing individuals in Maryland
- Serve as a coordinating agency that reports directly to the Governor's Office
- Work with various state and private agencies to ensure appropriate delivery of services to all of Maryland's diverse citizens
- Support the development of public policies, regulations, and programs that will benefit the community
- Work to improve access to communication to existing services and programs
- Advise State government and the General Assembly on the needs of deaf, deafblind, and hard of hearing individuals
- Coordinate with other units of the State and Federal governments about the services provided to deaf, deafblind, and hard of hearing Marylanders

#### **Our Goals:**

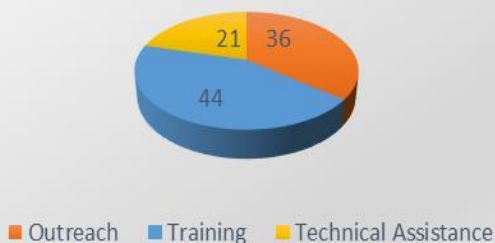
- to provide information and support to the deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind community;
- to serve as a resource for federal, state, and local government agencies; and
- to assist in the development of policies and programs that improve the lives of Marylanders who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deafblind.

#### **Community Services**

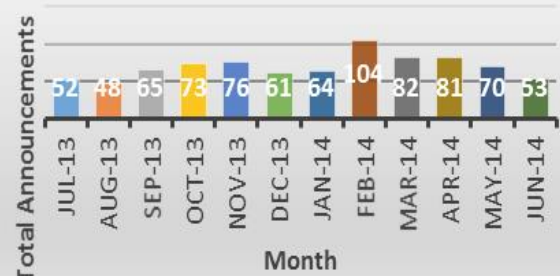
ODHH provides information and referral services to the community. ODHH operates three programs:

- Awareness Training and Technical Assistance
- Constituent Services (Information & Referral and Advocacy)
- Community Outreach and Education

**Outreach, Training & Technical Assistance  
Government Agencies and Constituents**



**Constituent Service Announcements**



## State and Local Agencies

ODHH provides information to state and local agencies to improve the quality of life for Marylanders who are deaf, hard of hearing or deafblind. Information provided includes:

- Technical assistance which includes communication accessibility assessments and the review of policies, procedures, and practices in comparison with effective services for deaf and hard of hearing individuals
- Trainings on a variety of topics including, but not limited to, ADA compliance, the use of adaptive equipment, and sensitivity and awareness trainings
- Individualized responses to inquiries received in person, via email, telephone or fax

ODHH helps develop new programs and policies to meet the needs of our community. ODHH is working with the following agencies and projects:

1. **Maryland Department of Public Safety & Correctional Services**
  - a. Corrections – to increase accessibility for deaf and hard of hearing Marylander inmates by providing assistance with curriculum development for prison personnel
2. **Maryland State Department of Education**
  - a. Team Maryland – gathering input to develop a comprehensive state plan for the education of deaf and hard of hearing students
  - b. DORS - Services to Deafblind Consumers
3. **Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs**
  - a. Veterans – information for veterans with hearing loss about available services
4. **Maryland Chiefs of Police Association and Local Police Departments**
  - a. Law enforcement and first responders – Visual Language Assistant card project
  - b. Law enforcement – to increase sensitivity and awareness among first responders and officers to the communication needs of Marylanders with hearing loss

ODHH also attends and participates in a number of committee and taskforce meetings to make sure these committees include information on issues of importance to the deaf, deafblind, and hard of hearing community. Examples of task force and committee meetings attended by ODHH staff include:

- ODHH Advisory Council
- Universal Newborn Hearing Screening Program
- Alliance/County Commissions on Disabilities
- Interagency Council on Aging
- MDOT Coordination Committee for Human Services
- Urban Areas Security Initiative – Vulnerable Populations
- Maryland State Steering Committee for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students
- Deaf V.I.S.A. Project
- Governor's Advisory Board for Telecommunications Relay
- Community Provider boards and councils
- Maryland Advisory Council Subcommittees
  - Communication Access
  - Children and Youth
  - Human Services
  - DeafBlind

### **How to contact us:**

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